



ANNUAL REPORT 2020

Tourism is Vital to Milwaukee's Future







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A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT & CEO

Exterior
rendering
of the
Wisconsin
Center
Convention
expansion



**DEAR PARTNERS,
WITHOUT QUESTION, 2020 WAS A
YEAR WE HOPE TO NEVER REPEAT.
WHAT WAS ANTICIPATED TO BE
ONE OF THE HIGHEST IMPACT
TRAVEL AND TOURISM YEARS ON
RECORD FOR MILWAUKEE ENDED
UP BEING SOMETHING ENTIRELY
DIFFERENT DUE TO THE COVID-19
PANDEMIC.**

Despite it all, I am filled with gratitude, optimism and energy for our community and all that lies ahead. VISIT Milwaukee is led by a skilled and experience-obsessed destination sales and marketing team who every day are creating exciting new ways to market our region on a national and international scale. I am so grateful to be part of this team, and to work with our nearly 600 partners and our broader community who individually and collectively make Milwaukee shine.

We were on an incredible runway coming out of 2019, with over 29 million visitors bringing a total of \$5.9 billion into the Greater Milwaukee area (up 3.5 percent over 2018) and supporting 53,200 full-time jobs. Although the pandemic was difficult for everyone, there is no doubt the impact on our tourism and hospitality industry was devastating. More than a quarter of those jobs were lost. Visitor spending was down 37%. State and local taxes from tourism were down 37%.

We have an ambitious plan to bring record levels of travel and tourism business back to our region. Even though it will take time, we are purposeful in our approach to:

- ✕ Promote the region as an ideal four-season destination to drive short-term hotel bookings.
- ✕ Drive longer-term convention and meeting bookings to fill the Wisconsin Center.
- ✕ Elevate the diverse and culturally appealing aspects of our community so all businesses can benefit from our tourism economy.

I love Milwaukee. I was born here, went to school here, and built my over 30-year career here. It is an honor of a lifetime to lead this mighty organization. As I do, I am especially grateful to our board of directors for their guidance and support always, but especially this past year. Soon we will celebrate the

EVEN A PANDEMIC CANNOT ERASE THE HEART AND SOUL OF THIS CITY OR ITS PEOPLE.

But even a pandemic cannot erase the heart and soul of this city or its people. While travel and tourism took a blow, we are on our way to brighter days. I am abundantly optimistic that vaccine progress coupled with loosening restrictions will spur more visitors and locals alike to get out and enjoy all Milwaukee has to offer for a night, a weekend or longer. We are already seeing this happen, with new flights coming to the market, increased hotel occupancy and improving restaurant trends.

Our partnerships with Travel Wisconsin and the Wisconsin Center District continue to strengthen, with each organization playing unique and vital roles to our region's success. The Wisconsin Center expansion will be a strategic asset as we market Milwaukee as one of the United States' most modern and desirable meeting and convention destinations. I cannot wait until we break ground on this transformative development for our city.

incredible contributions of Omar Shaikh to VISIT Milwaukee as he retires as chair of our board of directors after five years of service. He is arguably one of – if not *the* – biggest advocates for this city, infusing everything he does with positivity, ingenuity and inclusiveness. Thank you, Omar.

And thank you to our team and our partners. I look forward to seeing all of you soon in our bustling hotel lobbies, full theater houses, booked restaurants, lively music festivals and rowdy sports events.



Sincerely,
Peggy Williams-Smith

A MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD CHAIR

→ DEAR PARTNERS,

Even though 2020 felt at times like a gut punch on repeat, we are on our way to recovery. The resilience, heart, innovation and collaboration demonstrated by our partners and the entire community during the COVID-19 pandemic was truly something. I am so proud to be a Milwaukeean.

As chairman of VISIT Milwaukee for the past five years, and a board member for five years, I have had a front row seat to the vision and work that is driving our community forward. Thanks to the time, effort and investment of so many, Milwaukee is in the conversation in new and bigger ways. Foodies, suits, sports nuts, creatives, nature enthusiasts, watersports aficionados, beer connoisseurs, explorers, dreamers, thinkers... there is more than something for everyone in Milwaukee.

And that's the key: everyone. Core to our strategy at VISIT Milwaukee is ensuring our robust tourism economy benefits our whole community. From the largest hotel and most prominent restaurant to the artisanal coffee shop and neighborhood gallery, our success requires an intentional strategy to drive opportunity for all who make our city and region so exciting.

As we work to elevate Milwaukee as a destination and book larger and more frequent group and convention business, the expansion of the Wisconsin Center will be a game changer. With increased meeting spaces, a new ballroom, dining amenities, enhanced parking and infrastructure, the expansion effectively doubles the square footage of the Wisconsin Center. And, it will generate meaningful economic development, with the expansion projected to generate \$12.6 billion in spending over the next 30 years.

It has been humbling to work alongside my fellow board members, partners and the VISIT Milwaukee team during my time as chairman. But I have never been prouder than during the past year as the team stood as a forceful advocate for the businesses and people who drive our travel and tourism economy. Hotels, restaurants, bars, entertainment and cultural



venues all took a devastating hit during the pandemic. Just as quickly as VISIT Milwaukee pivoted to ensure as many of those survived as possible, we now turn back to the work of helping our partners and region thrive.

I am immensely grateful to this community. You make me a more empathetic leader. You inspire me with your ingenuity. You challenge me to build a better, more inclusive Milwaukee. And though our work is never done, I am proud of all that we have accomplished together. As my tenure on the VISIT Milwaukee board ends, you can trust that I will remain an active partner through my businesses and an ardent supporter through my voice and actions.

With gratitude,
Omar Shaikh

"VISIT Milwaukee is a best-in-class category winner in my mind. I constantly hear what an amazing job our convention and visitors bureau does compared to others across the United States. Thank you to VISIT for hunkering down and leading a team and city to find solutions in a very difficult climate."

**TARA WURTZ, DIRECTOR OF SALES AND MARKETING
CAMBRIA HOTEL MILWAUKEE DOWNTOWN**



MISSION

THE HEALTH OF OUR
COMMUNITY DEPENDS
UPON A STRONG
TOURISM ECONOMY.



VISIT Milwaukee's mission is to increase the economic impact of tourism for all people in the Greater Milwaukee area. Through sales, paid advertising and earned media, VISIT Milwaukee promotes the region as a premier destination for business and leisure travel.

We are the only local organization solely dedicated to marketing Milwaukee on a national and international scale. When meeting planners and travelers are determining their next destination, VISIT Milwaukee makes our city shine and showcases the very best of our community.

Tourism is vital to the success and quality of life for our entire community...and our future.



IN GRATITUDE TO OUR PARTNERS

→ **NEARLY 600 PARTNERS**, including hotels/motels, restaurants, attractions and businesses rely on VISIT Milwaukee to grow their business and contribute to the broader economic development of our city and region.

No question, our partners are the lifeblood of our community. In an exceptionally challenging 2020, our partners made incredible sacrifices and all went above and beyond to ensure Milwaukee remains a vibrant place where people want to visit, work and live.

We especially want to thank and recognize our hotel partners. Faced with new and evolving health and safety standards along with staffing and supply chain challenges, their commitment to delivering an outstanding guest experience never wavered. And as VISIT Milwaukee rebooked meetings and events for 2021 and beyond, our hotel partners were flexible, accommodating, and essential to getting our region on a path to recovery.

We also wanted to acknowledge the perseverance of Potawatomi Hotel & Casino and thank them for their continued sponsorship of VISIT Milwaukee during the pandemic. Confronted with a prolonged closure that lasted nearly four months, 2020 was a devastating year for one of Milwaukee's largest hospitality employers. As one of our largest strategic partners, we stand in solidarity with Potawatomi Hotel & Casino and remain committed as ever to marketing it as one of Milwaukee's premier tourism destinations.

In this report, you'll hear from several partners about the challenges faced in 2020 and how their relationship with VISIT Milwaukee was essential to weathering the economic storm of COVID-19. We remain grateful to all of VISIT Milwaukee's partners for their passion, generosity, leadership and fierce collaboration.

REGIONAL



STRATEGIC



CORPORATE





VISIT MILWAUKEE 2020 BY-THE-NUMBERS

There's no denying the devastating impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on Milwaukee's tourism, hospitality and lodging industries. VISIT Milwaukee has been vital to moving Milwaukee forward and jumpstarting the region's hospitality economy.

PANDEMIC'S IMPACT ON TOURISM IN GREATER MILWAUKEE AREA

DIRECT VISITOR SPENDING TOTALED \$2.081 BILLION

DOWN
37%*

TOURISM
SUPPORTED

**39,653
JOBS**

DOWN
26%*



\$1.5 BILLION

LABOR
INCOME
FROM
TOURISM

**STATE AND LOCAL TAXES
GENERATED \$271.9 MILLION
FROM TOURISM**

DOWN
30%*

**TOTAL BUSINESS SALES
BECAUSE OF TOURISM TOTALED
\$4.395 BILLION**

DOWN
26%*

EFFORTS TO GUIDE RECOVERY, SAVE LOCAL BUSINESS

EVENTS
CANCELED
31

MEETINGS
CANCELED
151

MEETINGS
REBOOKED
60%

CREATED
5
CAMPAIGNS
TO DRIVE
LOCAL
SPENDING

76%
VISIT
MILWAUKEE
PARTNER
RETENTION
IN 2020

“VISIT MILWAUKEE PROVIDED SUPPORT AS AN EXTENSION OF OUR SALES TEAM, PARTNERING ON HOTEL TOURS, MAKING INTRODUCTIONS TO MEETING PLANNERS AND ENSURING OUR MARKETING EFFORTS ON BEHALF OF ELDR+RIME AND THE RENAISSANCE WERE SHARED THROUGH VISIT’S SOCIAL CHANNELS.”

**Chantal Boncher, Director of Sales and Marketing
Renaissance Milwaukee West**



VITAL TO... REIMAGINING DESTINATION SALES & MARKETING FOR PANDEMIC TIMES



→ **WHEN TRAVEL BUSINESS AND** leisure travel came to a halt in March 2020, VISIT Milwaukee pivoted and found innovative ways to market the destination and keep partners front and center – and viable for the future.

CAMPAIGNS TO SUPPORT LOCAL SPENDING & SAVE OUR INSTITUTIONS

The strategic focus of VISIT Milwaukee's recent marketing campaigns (Season of Giving, Giving Fest, Milwaukee Hotel Month, Bring It Home) were to drive local spending at area hotels, restaurants and businesses. According to Longwoods International, local spending – which was encouraged in the campaigns – helped keep many hospitality businesses afloat. In 2020, local spending from both visitors and Milwaukeeans infused

\$2.5 billion into Wisconsin's economy, including \$821 million in restaurant spending and nearly \$264 million on lodging.

COLLABORATING WITH PARTNERS TO DRIVE HOTEL BOOKINGS

VISIT Milwaukee worked with hotel partners to drive room bookings during the pandemic. This included unique hotel packages, dedicated landing pages, social content and marketing dollars. These types of campaigns helped generate over 7,300 hotel bookings in 2020, keeping Milwaukee's hotels alive during a period of unprecedented downturn. VISIT Milwaukee also connected hotels with city leaders who sought to provide housing and linens for the homeless, a program that successfully kept many from sleeping on the streets.

A Hoan Bridge light show celebrated Giving Fest's finale and over 100 events that gave back to the city.



SHOWCASING MILWAUKEE DURING AN ALL-VIRTUAL DEMOCRATIC NATIONAL CONVENTION (DNC)

The DNC presented a marquee opportunity to feature Milwaukee as a premier destination to political influencers, delegates, media, corporate sponsors, meeting planners and beyond. When it became clear the DNC would be moving virtual, VISIT Milwaukee devised a robust strategic marketing activation to bring the city to DNC attendees virtually. From 32 brand new videos to hundreds of customized gift boxes, engaging social media content, earned media pitches and beyond, Milwaukee remained in the public eye leading up to and during the DNC.

STRATEGICALLY POSITIONING MILWAUKEE AS A SPORTS DESTINATION

Sports-related events and travel are returning faster compared to other segments. To continue strategically positioning Milwaukee as a sports destination, VISIT Milwaukee established Sports Milwaukee to bring even more major professional, amateur and youth sports events to the region. In just the first four months of 2021, sports tourism has generated over \$8 million in economic impact for the city.



The Wisconsin Center hosted Wisconsin Junior Volleyball, the first post-pandemic sports event.

200+
MILLION
**PAID MEDIA
IMPRESSIONS**

4.5 MILLION

VISITORS TO VISITMILWAUKEE.ORG SINCE 2018

3,549 HOTEL REFERRALS FROM VISITMILWAUKEE.ORG IN 2020

523 MILLION

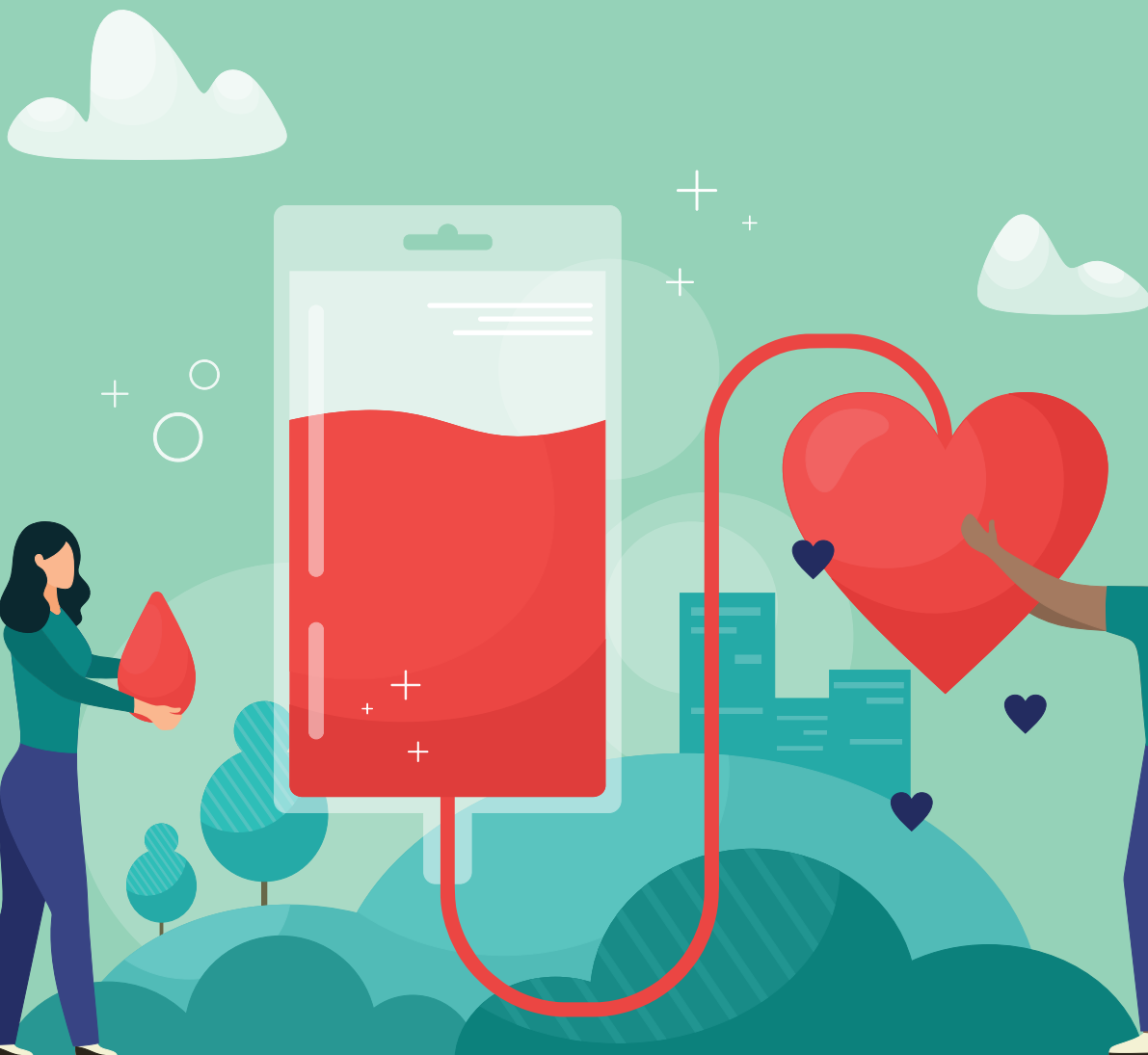
EARNED MEDIA IMPRESSIONS GARNERED DURING THE DNC



“USA FENCING HAS HAD THE PLEASURE OF HOLDING SUCCESSFUL EVENTS IN MILWAUKEE OVER MULTIPLE YEARS. WE HAVE PARTNERED WITH VARIOUS COMMUNITY GROUPS TO PROVIDE AN OPPORTUNITY FOR MILWAUKEE RESIDENTS TO EXPERIENCE THE SPORT OF FENCING, AND THE SUCCESS OF OUR COMPETITIONS IS DUE TO THE VALUABLE LONG-TERM PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN VISIT MILWAUKEE AND USA FENCING.”

Christine Simmons, Senior Director of Sports Operations, USA Fencing





“The team at Versiti is extremely grateful for the ongoing generosity of VISIT Milwaukee and its many members. When VISIT Milwaukee learned of the need for blood donations through joint partner Advocate Aurora Health Care, VISIT Milwaukee immediately stepped forward to help – and in a very big way – with the creation of its Hospitality Heroes program. Thanks to VISIT Milwaukee and its members, in 2020 alone, Versiti was able to collect more than 1,100 units of blood, positively impacting the lives of more than 3,000 people in our community.”

TARA BLAESING, REGIONAL MANAGER, DONOR RECRUITMENT, VERSITI BLOOD CENTER OF WISCONSIN

VITAL TO...

MILWAUKEE'S COVID RESPONSE

→ GIVEN VISIT MILWAUKEE'S REACH

and mission, we were a vital part of the region's COVID response, advocating for the hospitality industry, supporting local businesses and equipping the community with critical health and safety information.

PRESERVING MILWAUKEE'S TOURISM ECOSYSTEM

When the pandemic hit, VISIT Milwaukee's priority was ensuring Milwaukee's hotels, restaurants, attractions, meeting venues and more were viable post-pandemic. VISIT Milwaukee secured a \$500,000 Travel Wisconsin COVID grant which has been dedicated to advertising Milwaukee as a premier meetings and convention destination and a perfect place to take a vacation. We also connected our partners with critical financial relief information, including grants for movie

VISIT Milwaukee's dedicated coronavirus website provided a regularly updated list of businesses open, health and safety precautions being undertaken by the hospitality industry, FAQs for meeting planners and travelers and more – all of which positioned Milwaukee as a destination committed to public health and safety.

SUPPORTING HOSPITALITY WORKERS

Milwaukee's hospitality workers were among the hardest hit by the pandemic. VISIT Milwaukee's COVID website connected unemployed hospitality workers with job opportunities in the area, including full-time, part-time, same-day/on-demand gigs and more. VISIT Milwaukee also distributed 50,000 masks around the community and has invested nearly six figures in campaigns supporting the vaccination roll out.

VISIT MILWAUKEE SECURED A \$500,000 TRAVEL WISCONSIN COVID GRANT

theaters, hotels, live music and entertainment venues and small businesses. Our \$100,000 investments in campaigns such as Giving Fest and Hotel Month provided direct funding to local businesses and hotel partners.

TRUSTED SOURCE FOR COVID INFORMATION

As the COVID situation evolved in Wisconsin, VISIT Milwaukee was the go-to source for information, especially for its partners. VISIT Milwaukee's CEO Peggy Williams-Smith participated in weekly public health task force meetings to fiercely advocate for partners and drive strong collaboration between the tourism industry and the Milwaukee Public Health Department. Critical updates from the task force were shared with partners through real-time email communications and weekly webinars.

STANDING WITH OUR COMMUNITY

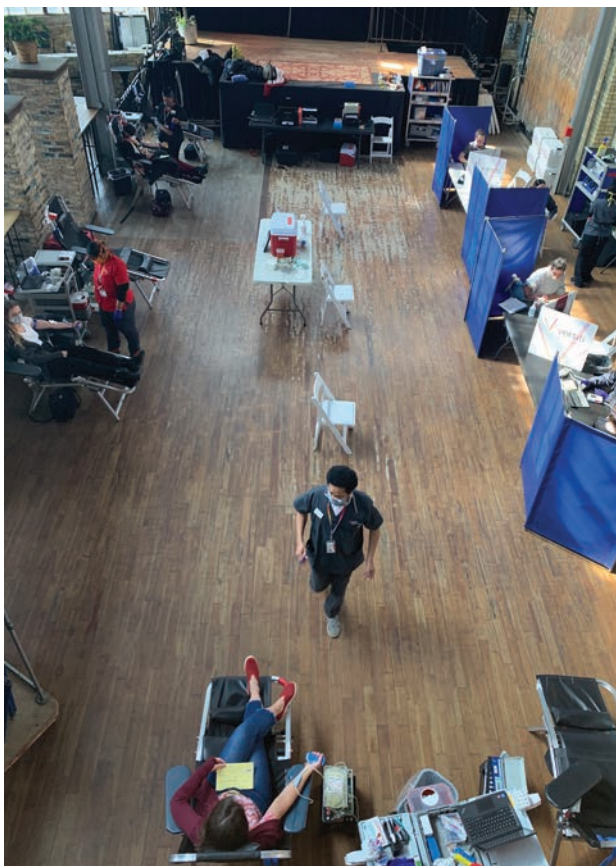
VISIT Milwaukee stood shoulder to shoulder with our community, supporting essential workers and community healthcare providers. Our First Responders Hotel Rates program connected healthcare workers – many of whom were vulnerable to COVID exposure and felt uncomfortable going home after shifts – with a comfortable and affordable place to sleep. And, our Hospitality Heroes Blood Drives provided healthcare providers with blood donations when the supply was at an all-time low.



166,419
VISITS TO
COVID SECTION OF
VISIT WEBSITE

144
ARTICLES IN WHICH
VISIT MILWAUKEE
ADVOCATED FOR
ADOPTION OF THE
COVID VACCINE

73
TOTAL WEBINARS
PRODUCED BY
VISIT MILWAUKEE
FEATURING COVID
UPDATES AND
RESEARCH



3,000
MILWAUKEEANS
IMPACTED BY
HOSPITALITY
HEROES BLOOD
DRIVES

Top: Peggy Williams-Smith and
Steve Baas speak to media at Citgo
Mask Giveaway
Left: Hospitality Heroes Blood
Drive at The Cooperage
Right: First Responders Lunch



VITAL TO... KEEPING MILWAUKEE ON THE GLOBAL STAGE

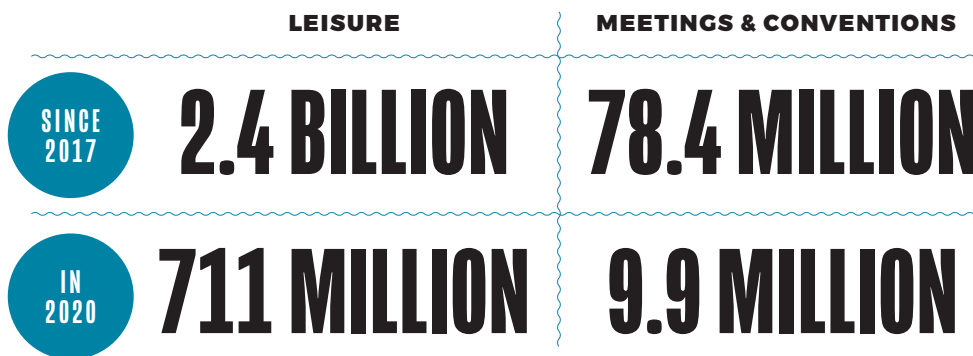
→ **PRE-PANDEMIC**, Milwaukee was enjoying a widely shared and revered reputation as one of the “coolest” cities in the U.S. VISIT Milwaukee is vital to ensuring the national conversation about our region stays strong among leisure travelers and meeting planners.

VISIT Milwaukee’s communications team is cultivating relationships with top-tier press outlets such as CNN, *New York Times*, *Condé Nast Traveler*, *Wall Street Journal* along with meeting industry trade media. From securing interviews to organizing customized press visits to providing recommendations, information and data, VISIT has secured 2,000

media placements on Milwaukee in the last three years, reaching millions of prospective visitors across the globe.

In 2021, VISIT Milwaukee will host the Society of American Travel Writers (SATW), one the largest and most prestigious travel writer groups in North America. VISIT Milwaukee is working with more than 100 local partners to show off the best of the city during the SATW convention, which is estimated to generate upwards of 180 million earned media impressions from potential leisure and business travelers.

EARNED MEDIA IMPRESSIONS



4 TRAVEL WRITER CONFERENCES HOSTED:

BRINGING 993 INDEPENDENT TRAVEL WRITERS SINCE 2015

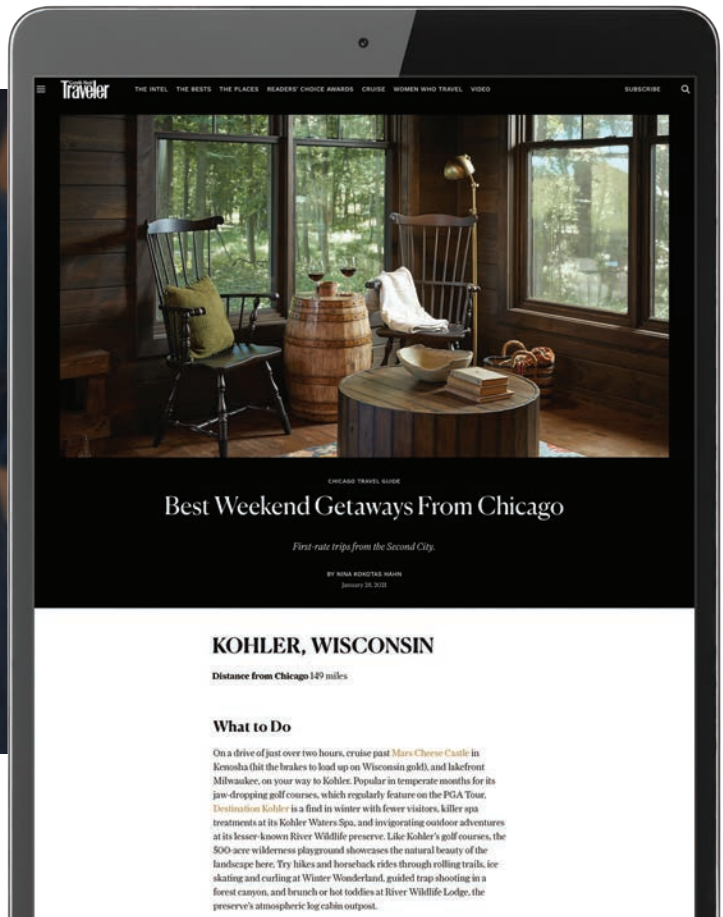
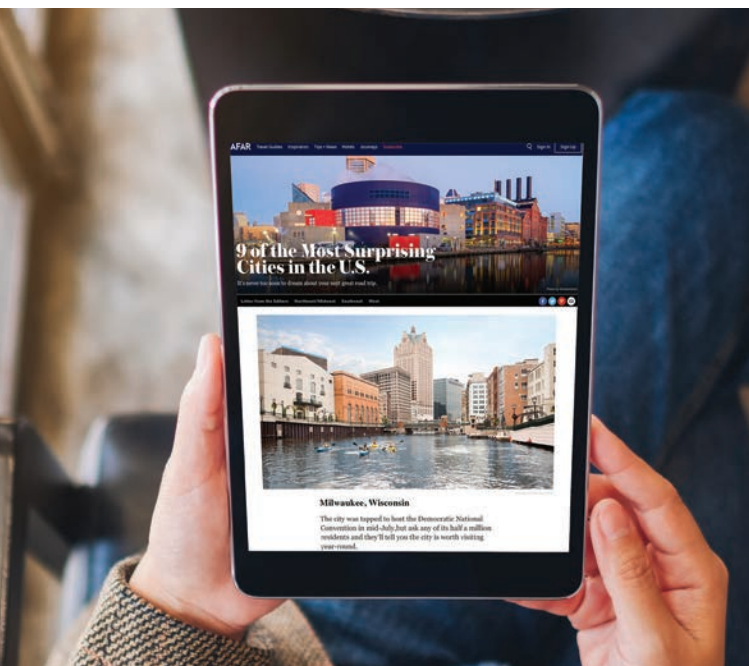
250+
TRAVEL PRESS
VISITING IN
2021-22

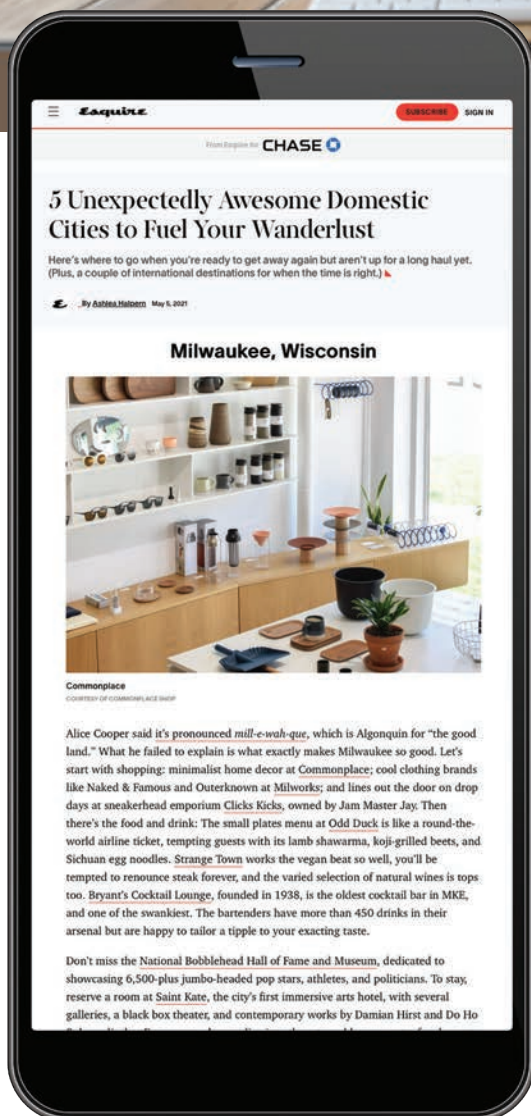
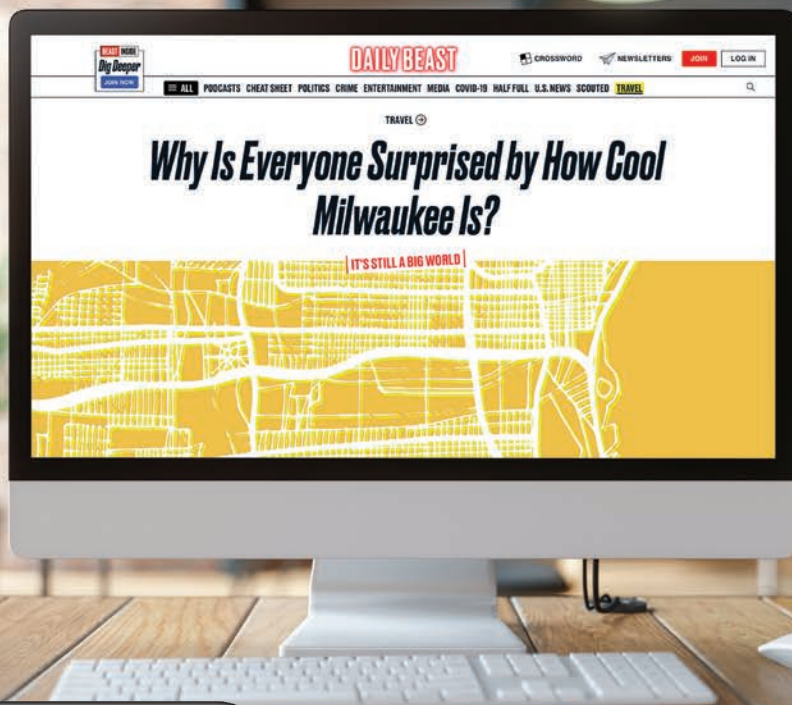
TOP MEDIA HITS IN 2020



DESTINATION SPOTLIGHT: THE BIG BUZZ IN MILWAUKEE

- MEETINGS TODAY, MARCH 2020





25 BEST PLACES TO VISIT IN 2020

- FORBES, 12/19/2019

10 BEST BEER SCENES YOU SHOULD EXPERIENCE IN 2020

- USA TODAY 10 BEST, 12/30/2019

“VISIT Milwaukee has always been a valuable partner for us. Being a historic cocktail lounge that depends on out-of-town visitors (but is located far away from the usual tourist attractions), it is vital that we get our story out to as many people as possible. VISIT Milwaukee helps us amplify our voice to tell our unique Milwaukee story to the world using print, social media and their connections to the world of food and travel writers.

During the Coronavirus pandemic, VISIT Milwaukee’s importance has been underscored as they became a partner and advocate for the hospitality industry in Milwaukee. Whether they were disseminating information or holding meetings with local authorities to gain a better understanding of regulations and best practices, VISIT Milwaukee has truly been on the front line helping to save our businesses and our industry.”

**JOHN DYE, OWNER
BRYANT’S COCKTAIL LOUNGE
AND AT RANDOM**



"VISIT Milwaukee has been critical to Menomonee Valley Partners in leveraging our assets and attracting more visits to our growing tourism destination. This last year of the COVID pandemic really demonstrated what a crucial resource VISIT Milwaukee is for neighborhood organizations."

**COREY ZETTS, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
MENOMONEE VALLEY PARTNERS**



VITAL TO... MILWAUKEE'S ECONOMIC RESILIENCE & RECOVERY

The Unique Unites
Ad Campaign
showcases the
Wisconsin Center
Convention
Expansion

→ **AS THE VACCINE ROLLOUT** continues, VISIT Milwaukee is well-positioned to capture and welcome returning leisure and group travelers. VISIT Milwaukee has a strategic roadmap in place to accelerate the region's recovery, driving bookings and supporting local businesses and the community.

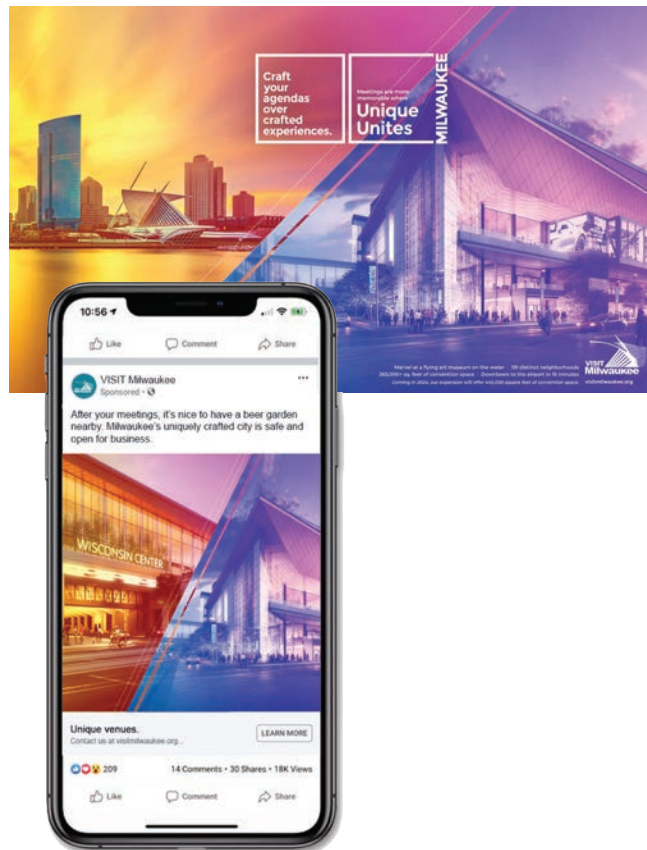
CAPTURE SHORT-TERM HOTEL BOOKINGS

According to Longwoods International, 88% of American travelers have plans to take a trip in the second half of 2021 and Destination Analysts reports that leisure travel could return to 2019 levels as early as 2022. VISIT Milwaukee is continuing to promote the region as an ideal four-season destination with targeted content, advertising and promotions. For groups eager to reschedule their events, the VISIT Milwaukee sales team is working to rebook them as quickly as possible. To date, 106,842 rooms have already been rebooked for 2021–2022.

FILL EXPANDED WISCONSIN CENTER

In 2020, Wisconsin Center District secured \$419 million in funding for the much-anticipated expansion of the Wisconsin Center. The convention center's expansion completion is well-timed; experts like the American Hotel & Lodging Association predict business will begin to normalize in 2024.

VISIT Milwaukee's deeply experienced sales and marketing team is ready to fill the expanded center with meetings and events, solidifying a strong pipeline of future bookings and economic impact. To support long-lead bookings, VISIT Milwaukee's new meetings campaign positions Milwaukee as a bold, modern, innovative and experience-obsessed meeting destination. And in 2021, VISIT Milwaukee's sales team has resumed attending in-person tradeshows and meeting with planners to promote the Wisconsin Center expansion.



SUPPORT COMMUNITY, DIVERSITY & INCLUSION

We know the more cohesive we are as a community, the more attractive we are to meeting planners and association executives. VISIT Milwaukee is committed to not only fostering a diverse, equitable, accessible and inclusive environment within our organization, but working to spread the benefits of tourism to all people in Greater Milwaukee area. We do this by telling the complete story of how wonderfully diverse our city is with our marketing and communications, supporting our diverse-owned businesses and working to ensure our partners reflect the demographic makeup of our city.

118

**FUTURE GROUPS/
CONVENTIONS
BOOKED**

151,507

**ROOM BOOKING
GOAL 2022-2026**

56%

**INCREASED
MEETINGS &
CONVENTION
ADVERTISING
BUDGET OVER 2019**



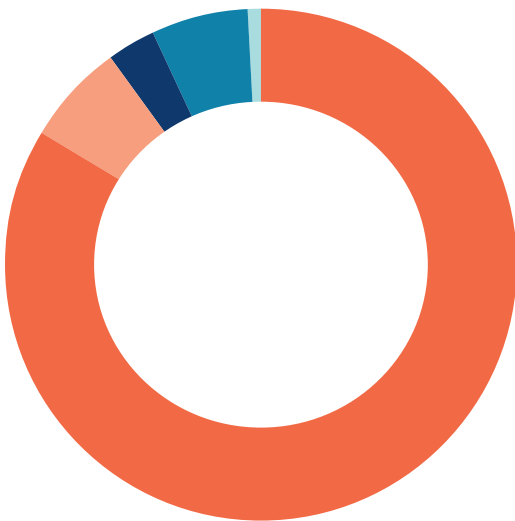


FINANCIALS

→ **VISIT MILWAUKEE OPERATES** as a service to the community and exists to generate economic impact through travel. We are responsible stewards of the funds we receive from hotel occupancy taxes, public funding, membership dues, program revenue and more.

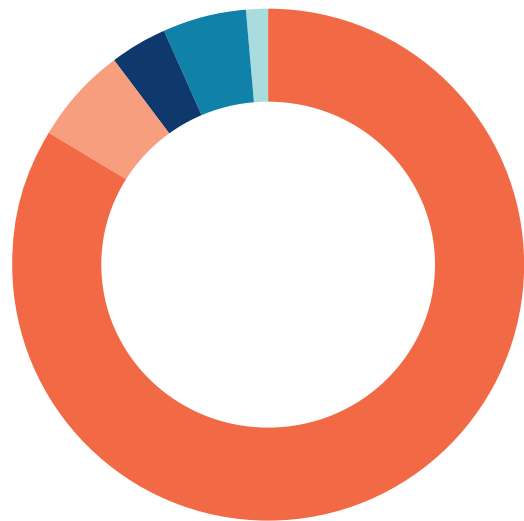
No question, 2020 was exceptionally challenging from a financial perspective. Direct visitor spending totaled \$1.33 billion in Milwaukee County, down 39.32% from 2019. And, state and local taxes generated from tourism totaled \$176.9 billion in Milwaukee County, down 32% from 2019.

As travel ground to a halt in March 2020, the impact on the hospitality industry was immediate and far-reaching. With payments deferred and reduced funding resources down, we took measures to reduce overhead, staffing and operating costs without impacting our ability to stay competitive and focus on sales and marketing. Our total operating budget in 2020 was \$6.4 million, down 34% compared to 2019. Looking ahead, we are committed to investing in our tourism marketing while being fiscally responsible as the hospitality industry recovers.



2020 FUNDING

- 83.6% Hotel Occupancy Taxes & Public Funding
- 6.4% Partner Dues & Programs
- 3.2% Program & Service Revenue
- 6.1% Marketing Sponsors & Ad Sales
- 0.6% Other



2020 SPENDING

- 83.5% Convention Sales & Destination Marketing
- 6.1% Communications
- 3.7% Convention Services
- 5.3% Administrative
- 1.2% Partnership



LEADERSHIP

VISIT Milwaukee's leadership team brings more than 80 years of combined tourism and hospitality experience, as well as strong involvement in community and industry organizations. Our team is well-regarded as among the best in the industry having received recognitions from Tempo Milwaukee, *Milwaukee Business Journal*, the Wisconsin Governor's Council on Tourism and more.

SENIOR LEADERSHIP



Peggy Williams-Smith
President & CEO



Megan Suardini
Chief Marketing Officer



Leslie Johnson
Vice President of Sales



Charlotte Hayslett
Vice President of HR



Luis Ayala
Vice President of Finance



Meg McKenna
Partnership Director



Brittany Korth
Director of Event Experience



Claire Koenig
Communications Director

SALES



Christina Fox
Convention Sales
Coordinator



Megan Husband
National Account
Executive



Lauren Hyps
Associate Director
of Sales



Erin Keedy
National Account
Executive



Connie Kopecky
Account Executive

COMMUNICATIONS



Laura Lutter Cole
National Account
Executive



Marissa Werner
Director of Sports
Development



Michaela Beal
Social Media Coordinator



John Blust
Communications
Coordinator



Lindsey McKee
Communications &
Group Tour Manager



Jake Meister
Leisure Communications
Manager

MARKETING



Mose Coffee
Digital Marketing
Manager



Cathy Kreiter
Marketing Coordinator



Kathryn Lavey
Senior Creative Manager



Alex Zimdars
Graphic Designer

EVENT EXPERIENCE



Emily Boulden
Event Experience
Coordinator



Andrew Knuth
Event Experience
Manager



Tony Snell
Visitor Experience
Manager



Bryan Kubel
Partnership Sales
Manager



Maria Strand
Partnership Coordinator

PARTNERSHIP

ADMINISTRATION & FINANCE



Ruthie Barrie
Executive Assistant



Lesa Edwards
Staff Accountant



Ann-Marie Parker
Staff Accountant



Der Vang
HR Specialist



BOARD OF DIRECTORS

VISIT Milwaukee is guided by an increasingly diverse Board of Directors comprised of Milwaukee's hospitality leaders, elected officials, community influencers and more. We are grateful for their support and ongoing commitment to building a better Milwaukee.

OFFICERS



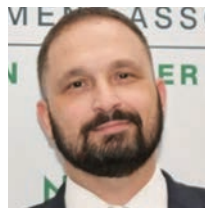
Omar Shaikh
Chair
SURG Restaurant Group



Dr. Eve M. Hall
Incoming Chair
Milwaukee Urban League



Steve Baas
Vice Chair
Metropolitan Milwaukee Association of Commerce (MMAC)



Jim Villa
Treasurer/Secretary
National Association for Industrial & Office Parks (NAIOP)



Peggy Williams-Smith
President & CEO
VISIT Milwaukee



Luis Ayala
Assistant Secretary
VISIT Milwaukee



Rafael Acevedo
City of Milwaukee



Danielle Bergner
J. Jeffers & Co.



Kate Braasch
Marquette University



Marty Brooks
Wisconsin Center District



Kathy Causier
Wauwatosa Common
Council



Grady L. Crosby
Johnson Controls



William J. Davidson
Harley-Davidson
Museum



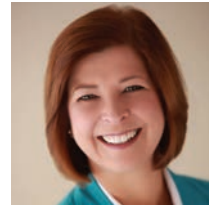
Brian Dranzik
Milwaukee Mitchell
International Airport



Michael Evans
Marcus Hotels & Resorts



Mark Flaherty
Jackson Street Holdings



Kristine Hillmer
Wisconsin Restaurant
Association



Tracy Johnson
Commercial Association
of REALTORS® Wisconsin



James Kanter
Central Standard
Craft Distilling



Curt Kluth
Saz's Hospitality Group



Lynda Kohler
SHARP Literacy



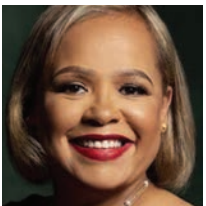
Jeremy Lucas
Milwaukee County Parks



Tom Malloy
Potawatomi
Hotel & Casino



Dennis McBride
Mayor of Wauwatosa



Arlisa E. McHenry
Milwaukee Common
Council



Rose Murack
Radisson Hotel
Milwaukee West



Kevin Newell
Royal Capital



Kathleen O'Leary
Wisconsin State Fair Park



Jason Rae
Wisconsin LGBT
Chamber of Commerce



Gerard A. Randall, Jr.
Milwaukee Partnership
Academy



Maxx Rodriguez
Milwaukee Brewers



Sarah Smith Pancheri
Milwaukee World
Festival, Inc.



Howard Snyder
Northwest Side
Community
Development Co.



Beth Weirick
Milwaukee Downtown,
Bid 21



Melissa Weiss
City of Wauwatosa,



Chuck Wikenhauser
Milwaukee County Zoo







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